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poetry—more spontaneous, as it appears to us, than any of his previous efforts—will take rank amongst the best of his works. The diminutive applied to the word “opera” must be accepted in this case only as a qualification affecting the title of a work to be performed in a drawing-room; for assuredly the majority of the pieces—especially the *finale* to the first act, the duet between *Jessy* and *Elspeth*, and the *trio* in the second act—are in every respect entitled to a place in a full opera.

Beautiful, too, and touchingly breathing the accents of hopeless love, is the opening solo of *Gilbert*, the tenor, as he listlessly trains the jessamine in front of the cottage; and, though we could linger over much that lingered with us for long afterwards, we cannot forbear citing the duet between *Elspeth* and *Gilbert*, in the first act, when the gipsy dilates upon the virtues of the magic draught, the dramatic feeling of which is touched with a masterly hand. Miss Edith Wynne, as the village *belle*, at once gained the favourable opinion of the audience, not only by the fresh quality of her voice, and purity of vocal style, but by an innate refinement which manifested itself throughout the evening; and, in spite of her inexperience of the stage, lent a peculiar interest to her entire performance. Miss Poole, as *Elspeth*, the gipsy, completely entered into the spirit of the part, and sang the characteristic music entrusted to her with a degree of archness that showed she thoroughly understood the undercurrent of satire with which the poet has invested the character. Mr. Whiffin, in the tenor part of the lover, and Mr. Wilkinson, as the sea captain (bass), sang with admirable effect, although the tenor was severely taxed, not only by the impassioned music with which the part abounds, but by the little rest which the dramatic situations allow him to take between the pieces. The piano-forte, artistically played by a sympathetic hand, sustained the entire weight of the instrumental portion of the opera; and the richness of the accompaniments were so skilfully combined with the voices, that one mind seemed to rule the whole performance. At the conclusion of the opera, Mr. Macfarren was loudly called for, and bowed his acknowledgments before a crowded audience.

SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY.

THE first concert of the present season took place on Friday, the 13th ult., at Exeter Hall, which was filled to overflowing in every part. Unfortunately, Mr. Sims Reeves—who was to have resumed his old post as first tenor—was prevented by indisposition from appearing; and his place was supplied by Mr. Wilbye Cooper. Notwithstanding this drawback, the oratorio—Costa's *Eli*—went to perfection. We have rarely heard so uniformly good a performance at these concerts. Madame Rudersdorff created quite a sensation in the florid air, “I will extol Thee,” and reluctantly accepted an universal *encore*. Madame Sainton-Dolby also (in a more quiet manner, in consequence of the nature of the subject), thoroughly enlisted the sympathy of the audience by her artistic rendering of the beautiful “Evening Prayer,” one of the most devotional, though least pretending, compositions in the oratorio.

MONDAY POPULAR CONCERTS.

THE first performance of the sixth season of these Chamber Concerts attracted a numerous audience on the 2nd ult., at St. James's Hall. Much interest was excited in consequence of the first appearance, at these concerts, of M. Lotto, the Polish violinist, who was already so favourably known as a solo player at the Crystal Palace. That he was fully able to sustain the first violin in quartets was amply proved by his playing in Beethoven's quartett in G (Op. 18, No. 2), and in Haydn's (Op. 64, No. 1), where the delicacy of his execution, and mastery over the mechanical difficulties of the compositions, were so conspicuously shown, that the audience at once recog-

nized a worthy successor to the eminent artists who have preceded him. In Bach's *Chaconne*, he fairly electrified the audience; and on being recalled, he played with equal effect another solo of Bach's, the prelude to the sonata in E major. At the second concert, he amply sustained his reputation, leading Beethoven's quartett in E flat, (No. 10,) Spohr's quartett in D minor, and performing with marvellous dexterity Tartini's “Trille du Diable,” a composition which, by the way, we think scarcely worth resuscitating. Having the interest of these concerts fairly at heart, we cannot refrain from hoping that some more attention may be bestowed on the construction of the programmes. At the second concert, for instance, out of five instrumental pieces, four were in minor keys; and two—the piano-forte sonata of Mozart, and the Presto Scherzando of Mendelssohn—following in immediate succession.

MR. HENRY LESLIE'S CHOIR.

THE first concert of this admirable choir, for the present season, took place on the 4th ult., at St. James's Hall; and being the anniversary of the death of Mendelssohn, the compositions performed were selected entirely from his works. Several of the pieces severely tested the capabilities of the singers; but so perfectly are they trained to the observance of the minutest effect of light and shade, that, even in the psalm for an eight-part choir, “Judge me, O God,” every phrase was spoken as with one voice. So triumphant a proof of what can be effected by submission to unlimited control should be taken to heart by all who love part-singing for its own sake.

FREE-TRADE HALL, MANCHESTER.

THE concert of Mr. Charles Hallé, on Thursday, the 19th ult., excited much interest, in consequence of a portion of the evening being devoted to the first part of Handel's *L'Allegro ed il Penseroso*, with Madame Goldschmidt as the principal vocalist. Great credit is due to Herr Otto Goldschmidt for drawing attention to this work, which, until its recent performance in London, was but little known. Had the praiseworthy efforts of the Handel Society been attended with sufficient success to enable them to continue the issue of Handel's works, no doubt the splendid edition of *L'Allegro*, published by them, under the editorship of Moscheles, would have been the standard authority in the library of all Handel lovers; for not only were all the movements which were added by Handel, after the original edition of 1740 was published, properly placed, but the whole was collated with the composer's own manuscript, in the Royal Library at Buckingham Palace. This edition is, however, now scarce; and the small hand copy issued in the cheap form by Mr. Novello, and edited by Mr. Monk, containing as it does all the corrections adopted by the Handel Society, may now have the effect, aided by the artistic zeal of Herr and Madame Goldschmidt, of bringing this beautiful work once more into notice. The performance at Manchester was, in every respect, most satisfactory; and, although we acknowledge that time has made inroads upon the fine voice of Madame Goldschmidt, the depth of feeling which she throws into her music, and the purity of her style, will ever make her welcome in a concert-room, especially as she devotes herself to the interpretation of those compositions where an intellectual reading is of the highest importance.

The second part of the concert included Beethoven's Choral Fantasia, in which Herr Goldschmidt sustained the pianoforte part, and a miscellaneous selection. The principal vocalists, in addition to Madame Goldschmidt, were Madame Sherrington, Miss Palmer, Miss S. Cole, Mr. Wilbye Cooper, and Mr. Lewis Thomas. The hall was extremely well attended, and the concert appeared to give universal satisfaction.